

Message Text

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ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 SCA-01 L-03 H-03 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SY-04 PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15 CPR-02

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R 091911Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2636

UNCLAS MEXICO 5737

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CPRS, MX

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION WITH MEXICAN AUTHORITIES ON MISTREATMENT
OF AMERICAN PRISIONERS

REF: MEXICO 5660

1. ON JULY 5 I TOOK ADVANTAGE OF A CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER RABASA ON OTHER MATTERS TO RAISE SUBJECT OF US PRISONERS IN MEXICO WITH ALLEGATIONS OF MISTREATMENT AND EVEN TORTURE. HE TOLD ME THAT THE MEMORANDUM CONSUL GENERAL PETERSON HAD LEFT WITH MR. AGUILAR HAD BEEN BROUGHT TO HIS ATTENTION AND THAT HE HAD HIMSELF RAISED THE MATTER WITH MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT MOYA PALENCIA IN REGARD TO HERMOSILLO, AND WITH SENOR OCTAVIO HERNANDEZ, ONE OF REGENT SENTIES' DEPUTIES, IN REGARD TO CONDITIONS AT LECUMBERRI PRISON. IN MAY PRESENCE, HE CALLED HERNANDEZ WHO TOLD HIM THAT HE HOPED TO HAVE A REPORT FOR US SHORTLY.

2. I TOLD HIM OF THE CBS INTERVIEWS AT HERMOSILLO AND OF LAST FRIDAY'S (JULY 5) INTERVIEW WITH MYSELF. I GAVE HIM THE GIST OF MY REPLIES TO NATHANSON'S QUESTIONS AND THE SEEMED SATISFIED, RECOGNIZING THAT THERE WERE CASES OF MISTREATMENT IN MEXICO JUST AS IN THE UNITED STATES AND ELSEWHERE. I TOLD HIM THAT I HAD STRESSED MEXICO'S OVERALL DEVOTION TO HUMAN RIGHTS, ETC.

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3. I ALSO TOLD RABASA OF THE IMPENDING VISIT OF A GAO TEAM,

STRESSING THAT THIS WAS NOT DIRECTED PRIMARILY AT MEXICO BUT
WAS A PART OF A WORLD-WIDE EFFORT. I TOLD HIM OF GAO'S INTEREST
IN VISITING PRISONS AND HE ASKED TO BE PERMITTED TO THINK
THIS ONE OVER. HE FELT IT MIGHT BE EMBARRASSING IF IT BECAME
PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE THAT A FOREIGN ENTITY WAS "INSPECTING" MEXICAN
PRISONS BUT AT THE SAME TIME RECOGNIZED THAT IT MIGHT LOOK
FURTIVE IF ACCESS TO THE PRISONS WAS DENIED.

4. I TOLD HIM THAT QUITE ASIDE FROM THE COMPLAINTS AT
HERMOSILLO AND LECUMBERRI, WE FOUND THAT THE GREATEST
NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS WAS IN REGARD TO MISTREATMENT DURING
THE PERIOD INITIALLY FOLLOWING ARREST AND TO THE INABILITY
OF AMERICAN CITIZENS TO COMMUNICATE WITH THEIR CONSULS DURING
THE FIRST FEW DAYS OF ARREST, AND POINTED OUT THAT THIS SEEMED
CONTRARY TO THE CONSULAR CONVENTION. RABASA AT ONCE ASKED WHETHER
WE HAD SPECIFIC CASES AND IF SO, IF WE COULD PRESENT THEM
IN A MEMORANDUM. I TOLD HIM THAT WE WOULD DO THIS EITHER WITH
AGUILAR OR WITH GALLASTEGUI.

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